

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 DOTE-00 SCCT-02 SY-10

DRC-01 /070 W

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R 270852Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9178

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LISBON 0715

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRN, PO

SUBJECT: CIVAIR - AIRPORT SECURITY

REFS: (A) STATE 020494 AND (B) STATE 034446

SUMMARY. SECURITY AT LISBON AIRPORT HAS IMPROVED OVER PAST MONTH AND THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT FURTHER IMPROVEMENT WILL TAKE PLACE, POSSIBLY AS RESULT EMBASSY APPROACHES TO DIVERSE GOP ENTITIES. GOP INTEREST AND CONCERN HAVE CLEARLY BEEN AROUSED. ONE RESULT WAS CREATION IN JANUARY OF NEW SECURITY COMMISSION WHICH CONTAINS REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH CONCERNED GOP DEPARTMENTS AND OF AIRLINES. COMMISSION HAS RECOMMENDED AND BEGUN TO IMPLEMENT MEASURES TO TIGHTEN PHYSICAL SECURITY OF AIRPORT BY BETTER CONTROLS OVER MOVEMENT OF PERSONNEL WITHIN SENSITIVE AREAS, BY INSTITUTING CENTRALIZED AND UNIFORM PASSENGER SCREENING (INCLUDING USE OF DETECTION DEVICES), AND BY SEALING OFF POTENTIAL ENTRY POINTS TO SENSITIVE AREAS. BY END OF APRIL 1974 SECURITY SITUATION SHOULD BE MUCH IMPROVED. IN MEAN-TIME IT LEAVES MUCH TO BE DESIRED. END SUMMARY

1. PRIOR TO RECEIPT REFTELS, EMBASSY HAD MADE APPROACHES TO DGS (POLITICAL POLICE), DGAC (CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT) AND FOREIGN OFFICE CONCERNING AIRPORT
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SECURITY. IN FOREIGN OFFICE APPROACH, EMBOFF NOTED THAT

PORTUGAL MAY NOW BE AN ATTRACTIVE TARGET FOR ARAB TERRORISTS GIVEN FACT PORTUGAL HAD PERMITTED USE OF AZORES FOR RESUPPLY OF ISRAEL DURING RECENT MIDEAST WAR. FURTHERMORE, TIGHTENING OF SECURITY AT OTHER EUROPEAN AIRPORTS MADE LESS SECURE LISBON AIRPORT ONE WHERE TERRORIST ACTS MORE LIKELY SUCCEED. FONOFF OFFICIAL ACKNOWLEDGED DANGER AND PROMISED CONTACT OTHER INTERESTED GOP AGENCIES.

2. POSSIBLY AS RESULT SECURITY AT LISBON AIRPORT (PORTELA) HAS IMPROVED OVER PAST MONTH AND THERE IS EVIDENCE OF FURTHER IMPROVEMENT TO COME. HOWEVER CURRENT SITUATION CONTAINS SECURITY GAPS WHICH COULD BE DANGEROUS. OFFICIAL OF ONE AMERICAN CARRIER HAS REMARKED THAT, SUDDENLY, THE COMPETENT AUTHORITIES ARE SHOWING GREAT INTEREST IN, AND DETERMINATION TO IMPROVE, SECURITY AT PORTELA. MISSION BELIEVES THAT IF PROPOSEDIMPROVEMENTS ARE IN FACT UNDERTAKEN, AND IT DIES APPEAR THAT THE PORTUGUESE ARE SERIOUS, SECURITY WILL BE CONSIDERABLY BETTER BY END OF APRIL.

3. ON JANUARY 21, 1974, FIRST MEETING HELD OF NEWLY CREATED SECURITY COMMISSION UNDER AUSPICES OF GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF CIVIL AVIATION, MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES REPRESENTATIVES OF LISBON AIRPORT AUTHORITY, GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF SECURITY, PORTUGUESE COUSTOMS, PORTUGUESE AIRLINE (TAP), PORTUGUESE COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY (C.T.T.) AND LOCAL ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES (RENA). COMMISSION MEETS ONCE EACH WEEK TO DISCUSS VARIOUS ASPECTS OF AIRPORT SECURITY. THE COMMISSION HAS ALREADY EITHER TAKEN OR AGREED TO TAKE STEPS WHICH SHOULD GREATLY INCREASE SECURITY:

A. NEW COLOR-CODED IDENTIFICATION BADGES WILL BE ISSUED TO ALL AIRPORT EMPLOYEES AND AIRLINE OFFICIALS SHORTLY WHICH WILL RESTRICT ACCESS TO SENSITIVE AREAS (TRANSIT LOUNGE, DEPARTURE GATES, RAMP, BAGGAGE AREAS) ACCORDING TO STRICT DEFINITION OF NEED FOR ACCESS. NAMES OF ALL LOCAL EMPLOYEES TO BE BADGED FOR ACCESS TO SUCH AREAS BEING CHECKED WITH DGS.

B. AIRPORT AUTHORITY PLANS TO BUY METAL DETECTION
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DEVICES AND INSTITUTE HAND BAGGAGE SEARCH COUNTERS THROUGH WHICH WILL PASS ALL DEPARTING, TRANSFER, AND TRANSIT PASSENGERS. AIRPORT HOPES TO HAVE DEVICES IN PLACE BY APRIL 30, 1974. AIRPORT ALSO PLANS HIRE EXTRA PERSONNEL TO MAN THESE FACILITIES. LISBON PRESS OF FEBRUARY 23 CARRIED ITEM SOURCED TO TAP OFFICIAL THAT TAP TO BEGIN SCREENING ITS INTERNATIONAL PASSENGERS IN APRIL, USING PUBLIC SECURITY POLICE PERSONNEL.

C. ACCESS TO BAGGAGE HANDLING AREAS HAS BEEN
TIGHTENED AND WILL BE FURTHER RESTRICTED.

D. BAGGAGE WEIGH-IN AREAS WILL BE CLOSED OFF TO
PREVENT ACCESS TO BAGGAGE HANDLING AREAS.

E. CONTROLS ARE TO BE TIGHTENED OVER CERTAIN OTHER
AREAS OF THE AIRPORT WHICH AT PRESENT COULD BE USED TO
GAIN ACCESS TO "STERILE" AREAS.

4. IN MEANTIME, SECURITY DEPENDS TO GREAT EXTENT ON WHAT
INDIVIDUAL AIRLINES (MAINLY AMERICAN) HAVE DONE AND ON
LUCK. BIGGEST PROBLEM IS LACK UNIFORMITY IN SECURITY
PRACTICES BY VARIOUS LINES WHO USE INTERNATIONAL PART
OF TERMINAL. WHILE TWA HAS HIRED EXTRA GUARDS (MAINLY
MOONLIGHTING POLICEMEN WHO ARMED AND UNIFORMED) AND
PERSONNEL TO SCREEN PASSENGERS, PAA HAS CONTRACTED WITH
COMMERCIAL SECURITY FIRM TO DO SAME (NOT ARMED) AND
BOTH EMPLOY METAL DETECTORS, OTHER LINES MUCH LESS STRICT.
TAP FOR EXAMPLE, WHICH USES INTERNATIONAL DEPARTURE AREA
FOR AFRICAN FLIGHTS AND PROVIDES GROUND SERVICES FOR
SEVERAL OTHER LINES, CONDUCTS ONLY SPOT CHECKS OF SOME
FLIGHTS. ON FEBRUARY 22 EMBOFF OBSERVED DEPARTURE OF
TWO FLIGHTS, ONE (TWA) WHERE GOOD SECURITY MEASURES
PRACTICED, AND, AT SAME TIME AND THROUGH ADJOINING GATE,
OTHER AIRLINE DEPARTURE TAKING PLACE WITH NO SUCH
CONTROLS. WITH INAUGURATION OF STEPS OUTLINED PARA 2
ABOVE (ESPECIALLY A AND B) CONSISTENCY PROBLEM WILL BE
GREATLY AMELIORATED, AT LEAST IN THESE TWO AREAS.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9179

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LISBON 0715

5. FOLLOWING INFO KEYED TO CRITERIA MENTIONED REFTEL A:

A. TWA AND PAA NOW HAVE GUARD (ONE) AS BACKUP TO SCREENING PERSONNEL. OTHER AIRLINES DO NOT.

B. THERE CURRENTLY NO SUCH COMMO SYSTEM, ALTHOUGH A FEW GROUND PERSONNEL OF THE AIRLINES CARRY WALKIE-TALKIE RADIOS CONNECTING THEM TO THEIR COMPANY OFFICES AND PERSONNEL. CONCEIVABLY THESE COULD BE LINKED TO POLICE COMMAND POST, WHICH LOCATED OUTSIDE OF TERMINAL BUILDING. AT PRESENT, ONLY COMMO SYSTEM WHEREBY GUARD CAN GET HELP IS HIS POLICEMAN'S WHISTLE.

C. WITH INSTALLATION OF AIRPORT OPERATED SCREENING EQUIPMENT, CONTROL WILL BE CENTRALIZED AND, PRESUMABLY, ALL SUCH PASSENGERS WILL BE SCREENED.

D. REENTRY TO RAMP AREA CURRENTLY PREVENTED BY LOCKED DOORS, PLUS OBSERVATION BY AIRLINES PERSONNEL IN AREA.

E. I.D. CARDS TO BE ISSUED SHOULD SOLVE THIS PROBLEM.

F. WHILE TWA CURRENTLY HAS ARMED, UNIFORMED GUARD AT DEPARTURE GATE WHEN FLIGHT IS BOARDING, THERE APPEAR TO BE FEW SUCH GUARDS ABOUT UNDER AIRPORT SPONSORSHIP. THERE ARE PLAINCLOTHES POLICE IN TERMINAL, INCLUDING STERILE AREAS, BUT THEY MAINLY CONCERNED WITH APPREHENDING PICKPOCKETS. THEY ARE HOWEVER, ARMED. NUMBER UNKNOWN. DEGREE TO WHICH AIRPORT WILL AUGMENT GUARD FORCE DEPENDS UPON AVAILABILITY OF MONEY FOR SALARIES.
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ONE AMERICAN AIRLINE OFFICIAL REMARKED THAT AIRPORT MAY HAVE DIFFICULTY HIRING SUITABLE PERSONNEL SINCE ITS PAY SCALE SO LOW. AIRPORT CURRENTLY HAGGLING WITH AIRLINES OVER HOW TO COLLECT SERVICE CHARGE PER PASSENGER FOR SCREENING PROCESS.

G. TWA AND PAA CURRENTLY HAVE ONE GUARD AT PARKED AIRCRAFT ON 24-HOUR BASIS. OTHER LINES APPEAR TO HAVE NONE AND NOT KNOWN IF AIRPORT WILL INSTITUTE. THERE IS NO AIRPORT PERIMETER SECURITY, OTHER THAN A FENCE.

H. CURRENTLY, ONLY TWA HAS SUCH GUARDS.

6. MISSION WILL CONTINUE PUSH IN APPROPRIATE AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN PORTELA SECURITY AND WILL KEEP DEPARTMENT ADVISED OF PROGRESS.

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